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WILLIAM LE QUEUX'S New Serial Now Commencing,

"THE GREAT PLOT."

A thrilling incident from this week's instalment of Mr. WILLIAM LE QUEUX'S Mysterious Romance, "THE GREAT PLOT."

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IN ALL LANDS
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"Very carefully prepared and highly nutritious."—*Lancet.*
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. . For . .
INFANTS, CHILDREN, INVALIDS, and the AGED.
Purveyors by Special Appointment to
H.I.M. THE EMPRESS OF RUSSIA.

THE LAST FEW DAYS.

NOTES ON NEWS OF THE WEEK.

BEARS IN A CATHEDRAL.

Three hungry black bears successfully hold the Cathedral of Cominac, in the Department of Ariege, France, against the Government inspector who wished to take an official inventory.

A Royal Motor Tourist: Queen Margaret, the Dowager Queen of Italy, has arranged to leave for New York at the beginning of April, accompanied by a suite of three persons and a chauffeur and mechanician. She is taking a specially-built 50 h.p. motor-car, in which she will make a tour of the States.

A committee of townspeople purchased the bears from a travelling showman last week, after the cathedral authorities had been notified of the forthcoming visitation.

The showman agreed to return half the purchase money if the bears survived the siege, and were afterwards delivered to him in good condition.

The animals were locked in a coal cellar adjoining the cathedral, and for two days before the expected visitation were deprived of food. As the inspector unexpectedly delayed his visit a day, they were ravenously hungry, as well as angry, when he finally arrived before the west door of the cathedral with his papers and a military escort.

To the surprise of the inspector his demand for admittance to the cathedral was instantly complied with. But no sooner had he stepped inside, with his escort, than the great door was shut and bolted.

A moment later the startled inspector discovered the bears. They had been sniffing hungrily around the choir, but the noise of the closing door attracted their attention, and they trotted down the central aisle of the nave to investigate the newcomers.

The inspector and the soldiers made frantic efforts to re-open the door. This caused derisive laughter on the outside. Then the frightened official vaulted over some chairs and climbed on top of a confessional, while his terror-stricken companions ran down the side aisles shrieking wildly for help.

The soldiers finally managed to secrete themselves in a side chapel. Then a townsman, representing the bears, opened negotiations with the inspector.

"Will you go away if we open the door?" he called.

"At once," replied the inspector.

The door was opened a little way, and the inspector, sliding down from his confessional, made a dash and squeezed through just in time. A second later one of the bears was clawing the closed door.

Eventually the showman was induced to recapture the bears, and they were fed, afterwards being locked up again in the coal cellar to await further Government attacks.

NOVEL LIFE INSURANCE.

Berkman, the Anarchist who attempted to murder Mr. H. C. Frick, of the Carnegie Steel Company, will be released on April 18.

Mr. Frick has arranged that Berkman shall be watched by detectives until one or the other of them dies. The espionage will cost about £2,000 annually, but Mr. Frick thinks it will be a good life insurance investment.

ROYAL DESCENT OF THE EX-PREMIER.

According to a genealogical table published by Mr. F. H. Relton, in *Notes and Queries*, Mr. Balfour is, through his grandmother, fifteenth in direct descent from King Robert II. of Scotland, and, through his mother, twenty-first in a direct line from Edward I.

MONKEY STUDY.

The University of Chicago has decided to establish a department for the study of the language of monkeys. Three dozen monkeys from Central Africa are now on their way to Chicago. Special cages, with steam heat and all modern conveniences, have been erected for them in the psychology building.

Photo, Park.

SOLDIERS MADE WHILE YOU WAIT: A photograph taken at Hounslow shows how Colonel Pollock's scheme for turning out trained soldiers in six months is progressing.

WAR BY BOMBS.

Information published in Berlin states that a renewed outbreak of the Russian revolution is imminent.

The central revolutionary executive committee are distributing great quantities of arms and ammunition, particularly bombs. On this occasion the revolutionists will not fight in masses, but in small flying columns, which will employ the bombs as their principal instruments of destruction.

One of the most remarkabe features of the movement is the enormous quantities of small bombs available for use. The scheme is to destroy the permanent way of railways and cut telegraph wires simultaneously in many different parts throughout the country. The prosperous quarters of many towns are also to be set on fire at a given moment.

Photo, Underwood.

The King and Queen of Portugal and the King of Spain at a pigeon-shooting match in Madrid.

A WALLET OF DIAMONDS.

Mr. Isaac Eidinoff, a Hatton Garden diamond merchant, sustained a serious loss in Birmingham on Saturday, when he was deprived of a wallet of diamonds, valued at £5,000.

About two o'clock in the afternoon he went to the post-office in Vittoria Street, which is also a chemist's shop, to post a registered parcel of diamonds to his brother at Amsterdam. Some other stones contained in a wallet Mr. Eidinoff laid down on a side counter while he addressed the registered envelope. Having made up the Amsterdam letter and handed it to the clerk, he left the post-office, forgetfully leaving the wallet behind him.

A quarter of an hour later he discovered his loss, and ran back to the post-office. The packet, however, had gone, and up to the present nothing has been heard of it.

Mr. Eidinoff says that he has nobody but himself to blame for his misfortune, and can give no explanation of how he came to forget the wallet, except that he was in a hurry to get away to meet some friends. Altogether he had with him parcels of gems valued at £20,000. The missing diamonds are said to have been insured for £3,000.

It will be remembered that it was in a Birmingham chemist's shop that thieves secured £10,000 worth of diamonds a couple of years ago. On that occasion the owner's bag was taken whilst making a purchase, and a bag of a precisely similar description left in its place.

Photo, Reuscher.

Plucky Austrian Princess: Princess Elisabeth of Windischgraetz, the late Crown Prince (of Austria) Rudolph's only daughter, was successfully operated upon last week. She showed no sign of fear, and chatted in lively strain to the doctor right up to the moment of taking the anæsthetic. Immediately after the operation, which lasted one hour, the Princess awoke, and felt comparatively well.

PANIC ON A LINER.

A panic was caused on the *Philadelphia* by a terrific wall of water, which struck the liner, says the New York correspondent of the *Herald*.

The vessel was proceeding in an ordinary sea, and Captain Mills was on the bridge, when an immense wave came over the port bow, carrying away part of the bowsprit and smashing the door of the officers' deck-house.

The water descended into the drawing-room on the main deck, and poured in a cascade down the companion way to the main saloon, where a concert was in progress.

Men and women dropped on their knees in prayer, and others rushed on deck. The ship reeled and quivered under the shock, but after five minutes the officers managed to calm the terrified passengers

Photo, Illustrations Bureau.

THE ROYAL TOUR: The Prince of Wales presenting new colours to the South Staffordshire Regiment at Benares.

Photo, Knight.

ST. PATRICK'S DAY AT ALDERSHOT: Distributing shamrock to the troops.

BRITISH FIGHT REBEL NATIVES IN NIGERIA.

Captain R. H. Goodwin, of the Royal Artillery, in command of the expedition against the Sokoto rebels, has attacked the enemy (says the *Daily Mail* correspondent).

The natives twice charged the British square and were almost annihilated.

Our force then advanced on Satiru, which was found to be strongly held. The town was bombarded and taken at the point of the bayonet.

Great slaughter was done among the enemy, who fought desperately, standing up to the charges of our men. The natives were finally driven from the town, and pursued by mounted infantry.

Over three hundred of the enemy were killed, including their leader.

The revolt is entirely crushed, and the loyal chiefs are co-operating in the pursuit of the defeated rebels.

Captain A. E. Gallagher was severely wounded in the shoulder, but is not in serious danger.

The rising in Sokoto began early in February with the appearance of a new Mahdi. On February 14 a British detachment in Sokoto was attacked, and three British officers and twenty-five natives were killed. The disaster was due to the horses bolting and breaking the British square.

A reinforcement of 150 men was despatched to the garrison at Sokoto, and reached there at the end of February. Though not in actual danger, the garrison was isolated in a hostile country, and a large relief expedition was organised at Lokoja and Zungeru. A force of 650 men, with two guns and a maxim, destined to operate against the rebel Munshis in the south of Northern Nigeria, was recalled, and with other units started northwards for Sokoto.

It is this united force which has achieved such a striking victory.

RIFLES v. SCYTHES.

A desperate encounter between church rioters and the military is reported from Saint Gorgon, in Brittany, where fatal results were averted by the mayor.

The soldiers, escorting the inspector who came to take the inventory, were obliged to use the butt-ends of their rifles against the peasants, who were armed with pitchforks and scythes.

The soldiers, finding themselves outnumbered, drew their revolvers. They were about to fire when the mayor of the village rushed between the combatants and declared he would be the first to die. At this the villagers desisted, and the military retired.

At Langolen, Finistère, the defenders of the church syringed the soldiers with sulphuric acid. A breach had to be made in the church wall before the inspector and the troops could enter.

The violence of the defenders at St. Martin, near Lorient, so excited the soldiery that they sacked the vestry, stealing silver ornaments, altar cloths, and candles.

P.I.P. SNAPSHOTS.

A woman's rifle club has been started in Surrey. We hear that the neighbouring golfers intend removing their club to the next county.

"There has been an accident, and it has been the cause of death. We say the accident has been accidental." This was the jury's verdict at an inquest last week at St. Helens. And yet people impugn the intelligence of British juries!

Undoubtedly our Post Office is waking up. The authorities are to be congratulated on a smart piece of work in Wales. Says the *Western Mail*: "A telegram was handed in at 11.19 a.m. at the central post-office at Cardiff, and the message as it was delivered shows that it was received at the Canton (Cardiff) Post Office at 11.18 a.m."

An anti-kissing club has been formed by the young women of Urbana, Ohio. The members are pledged not to allow themselves to be kissed, and a penalty of £1 is fixed for violation of the rule. Young men are petitioning for a reduction of the fine on taking a quantity.

A suburban bootmaker has the following kindly invitation in his window: "Come in here and have a fit."

A motor-boat has been invented which, it is claimed, will cross the Atlantic in two days. "The faster it goes," a morning paper assures us, "the quicker it travels." Really!

A mysterious poet who has dwelt and wandered unrecognised among the Surrey hills for twenty years has suddenly leapt into fame. What is making most for his popularity is that he burns his verses as soon as they are written. Spring poets take note.

CRITICUS.

Photo, Illustrations Bureau.

The Duchess of Portland at Fulham last week, opening a Church Army Labour Depot.

THE FIGHTING IN NIGERIA: The enemy completely routed at the point of the bayonet.

Photo, Illustrations Bureau.

THE FRENCH MINE DISASTER: Our first picture shows a poor family, rendered destitute by the loss of the bread-winner, in which there are seven children, including twins seven weeks old. In this street there are thirty-seven cottages, and only one man remains. In the whole village there are 520 widows. Our second picture shows the funeral of some of the victims during a heavy snowstorm.

P.I.P. FARMER AND GARDENER.

A Good Pig.

My Welsh correspondent is quite right in declaring that Tamworth pigs are the best a small farmer can keep, although there is no doubt that the Middle White and the Berkshire are other very good breeds for either the novice or the man who breeds for sale on a big scale. The Tamworth is an economical feeder, and as my correspondent lives quite close to a good market there should be no difficulty in buying one or two sows for breeding purposes, although if he is determined to have pedigree stock I would advise him to visit a show, or to write to Mr. John Thornton, auctioneer, 7 Princes Street, Hanover, Square, London, W., asking when a good sale is likely to be held. The Tamworth, of course, derives its name from the Midlands, and it can be honestly recommended because of its many good properties.

Carnations and Picotees.

The seed of these most beautiful plants must be sown in March, April, or May in pans of rich soil, scattering the seeds thinly and covering to the depth of about ¼in., and, after watering, place under glass. Prick out on well-prepared nursery beds to strengthen when the young plants have made four or five leaves, and plant out in September where intended to bloom, or pot up for the greenhouse. Those remaining in the open ground should have the benefit of a slight protection in severe weather, and be planted in a warm and dry position. A first-class strain of seed will produce at least 80 per cent. of fine double flowers, and the choicer varieties should be set aside for propagation by layering or cuttings.

Planting out Onions.

Those growers who have at the present time a good breadth of Tripoli onions that were sown last August must now make preparations for planting them out in the position where they are to finish their growth. Land for this purpose should have been deeply worked and well manured, if at all heavy in character, some time before the turn of the year. If it was then thrown up roughly, watch should be kept for a dry windy day or two. The advantage of laying the land up rough will be seen, as there will be a sufficient depth of semi-dry friable soil very quickly available. When these conditions are present the men should be sent over the land with the Canterbury hoe, and, if it is not worked too deeply, there will soon be a level surface of fine soil just in the right trim for planting. The land should be drawn out into very shallow drills, about 1in. deep and from 9in. to 12in. apart. Then the best of the onions should be lifted—not pulled—from the seed-bed and be planted with the ordinary dibber at from 6in. to 8in. apart along the drills. The greatest care must be taken that the plants are not put into the ground at too great a depth. If they are lifted and not pulled from the land they will have good root systems attached, and in planting only these roots should be inserted in the soil. We have seen Tripoli onions planted deeply, almost like leeks. Such plants can never do well. The ordinary onion must be kept to the surface if it is to form a proper bulb. A dressing of soot or salt and soot should be sown over the land before the Canterbury hoes are put in. So soon as the crop has taken hold the land should receive a shallow hoeing, 1in. depth will be sufficient. Onions do not need deep surface culture; in fact, do very much the best without it; at the same time, the surface must not be allowed to become hard and baked.

Photo, Holt.

A Wonderful Woman: Elizabeth Parsam, of Chilcote, who, although 100 years old, is still a keen agriculturist. She lost two fingers while thrashing.

THE EDITOR TO HIS FRIENDS.

Mr. Charles R. Joplin, writing to me from Wadestown, Wellington, New Zealand, says:

Your football photos have been very interesting to my friends and me, and we thank you for publishing them, as they showed us realistically what our worthy representatives were doing in the Old Country. Perhaps your correspondent, who thought in your issue of Dec. 16th, 1905, that you devoted too much space to football views, was suffering from a surfeit of defeats, and desired a change. Well, he has it now. Wales licked us, and we have taken the licking "standing." I hope, when your representatives visit us, they will give our men a good "go." I am sure they can do so. A Britisher is never so dangerous as when beaten.

Another reader, Mr. Pettipher, of North Bay, Ontario, whose notepaper proclaims him to be an "estate, insurance, and financial broker," writes to me as follows:

I notice a cut in your issue of Dec. 23rd, which I have cut out and attach hereto, showing a method of moving a building, which is said below the picture to be a novel method of moving a building. I would like to tell you that the method is not at all unusual, as it is done here in Canada every day. In this little town of only 5,000 people houses are constantly being moved. Sometimes a windlass is used in lieu of the hand winch, as shown in your picture. The windlass is generally, however, run by a horse. I myself had a good-sized house moved 300 yards last year, and am about to move another this year. In fact, there are people who make a regular business of moving houses.

I trust you will bear with me while I explain my reasons for mentioning the above. I don't know if English people generally know that the average Canadian thinks that English people are behind the times. Perhaps we are in certain things; so is the Canadian. The English are conservative, and do not jump at an invention as quick as it is patented like the Americans; but in England there are plenty of things to make the Canadian think he is behind time. If a Canadian saw the inclosed picture—and I suppose plenty have seen it—he would likely remark that the English are only just beginning to find out something. Last July my mother came over here to pay me a visit, and it so happened that one of the hotels was being removed in this town. I took her to see the operations. It is a good-sized three-storey building, and one horse on a windlass moved the whole thing. My mother wrote home the next day to say that it was not lies that I had told her in my letters about moving houses, as she had seen the operation.

I am an Englishman and from London, and have had many a battle of words in defence of my countrymen when Canadians have said we are behind the times. However, if I live here fifty years more I shall give each country credit where it is due.

I don't like to be rude to Mr. Pettipher's typist, but, in justice to the Old Country, I feel bound to state that, although we may not be able to move our houses about on trolleys, any girl of sixteen who could work a typewriter at all would spell better and type better than the Canadian whose work is lying before me now. I wish I could reproduce it in facsimile as an example of how *not* to do it!

I hope you began reading our new serial story, "The Great Plot," in last week's paper. If you did not do so, begin to-day. I can safely say that you will not regret it; in fact, after perusing the whole of the story, I think I may prophesy that you will declare Mr. William Le Queux's tale to be the most fascinating serial which has ever appeared in the pages of the *Penny Illustrated Paper*.

The great thing about Mr. Le Queux's stories is that one feels quite certain that the author knows from actual experience of the people, places, and phases of life with which he deals. Few writers have led so cosmopolitan an existence — have travelled so widely—as the author of our new serial, and, as I mentioned last week, he is as much a diplomat and student of European politics from the inside as he is a novelist.

The author of "The Great Plot," and of "Strange Tales of a Nihilist," "A Secret Service," "Secrets of the Foreign Office," "Guilty Bonds," and some dozens of other popular tales, has travelled in every part of the Continent in search of his material. He has also made extensive pilgrimages into Algeria, Morocco, Kabylia, the Areg region of the Sahara, and other little-known quarters of the globe.

VALENTIA STEER.

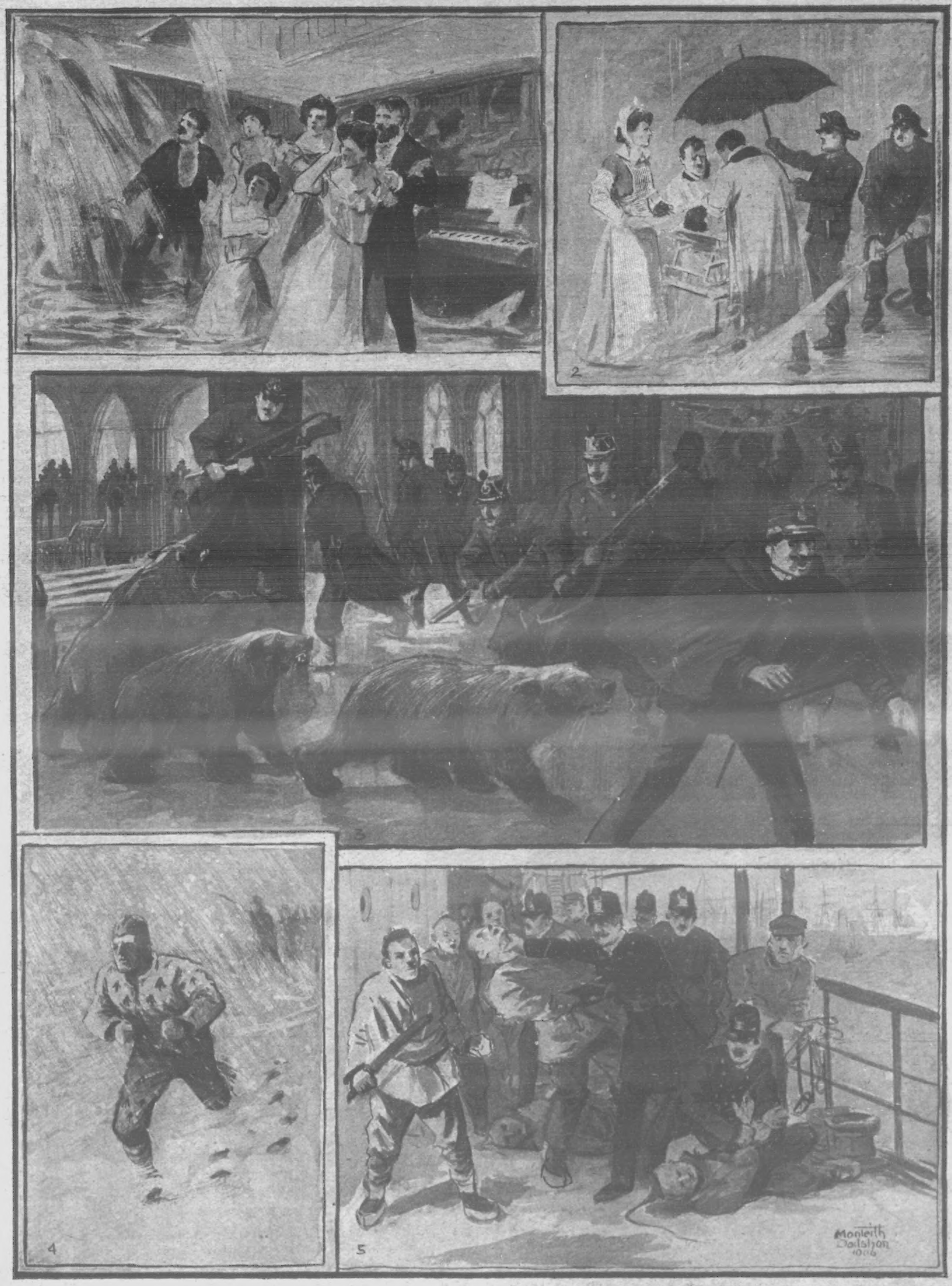
SOME CHARMING CHILD PHOTOS—A STUDY IN CONTRASTS: 1. Miss Margaret Huxley—Huxley's grandchild. 2. The children of the Duchess of Beaufort. 3. Lady Elizabeth Lynn, youngest daughter of the Earl of Strathmore. Photos by Barnett, Willoughby, and Craigie Halkett.

Photos Nops.

SOME CHARMING CHILD PHOTOS—A STUDY IN CONTRASTS: London's poorer children amusing themselves on the Embankment and in the courts.

Subscriptions for the PENNY ILLUSTRATED PAPER should be sent to the Publisher, 18 Henrietta Street, W.C. The "P.I.P." will be sent post-free to any part of the United Kingdom for thirteen weeks, on receipt of postal order, value 1s. 8d.; six months, 3s. 3d.; one year, 6s. 6d. Single copies post-free 1½d. For foreign postage the rates are: three months, 2s. 2d.; six months, 4s. 4d.; one year, 8s. 8d. The PENNY ILLUSTRATED PAPER may be sent by halfpenny post to any place in the United Kingdom. To the Colonies or any foreign place the postage is one penny.

EXCITING EVENTS OF THE WEEK AT HOME AND ABROAD.



1. During a concert a tidal wave swept over the Atlantic liner "Philadelphia," causing a panic.

2. Surgeons in the Trull Hospital, Biddeford, Maine, performed an operation while a fire was raging in the building.

3. Three hungry black bears, purchased from a showman by a committee of townspeople, successfully hold the Cathedral of Cominac, in the Department of Ariege, against the Government inspector, who wished to take an official inventory.

4. Taking advantage of a blinding snowstorm, a convict in an agricultural party at Dartmoor rushed away. Alarms were instantly raised, and he was promptly recaptured.

5. The Chinese sailors on the British steamer "Epsom" mutineered at Naples. After a severe fight with the police, they were overpowered and put in irons.

THE WORLD OF PASTIME.

FOOTBALL.

There were no Cup ties played last Saturday, but Cup-tie teams were very much in evidence, for all the four left in for the English trophy won their matches. This points to a keen struggle next week in the semi-finals, as it shows the quartette to be in form. Nor can it be put forward that the playing of the

Photo, P.I.P.

England v. Scotland: English goalkeeper (Miss S. Johnson) saves well.

secured the points by 1 goal to nil, but they were always masters of the situation. The result proves that on Manor Field, Plumstead, at least, the Arsenal are a hard side to beat, and by securing the points they have practically assured their position in the first division, for they will have to fall right away to lose it on present form.

Middlesbrough are making almost frantic efforts to escape relegation to the Second Division. They have paid a high price for Stephen Bloomer, the Derby County crack, a player at one time indispensable to England's international side. Then Brawn of Aston Villa has gone to Tees-side, but only Bloomer has yet figured in the ranks of their new club; and whether they will prove a blessing or otherwise to Middlesbrough has yet to be seen. Last Saturday Middlesbrough were easily beaten by Liverpool by 6 goals to 1—with Bloomer playing.

Another club in the semi-final, Everton, beat Blackburn Rovers at Ewood Park by 2 goals to 1, a very good win away from home, and Newcastle United had the better of poor, unfortunate Wolverhampton Wanderers by 2 goals to nil. Preston

Ashcroft, who played a good game for Woolwich against Derby County.

Carrick, who did some brilliant passing for the 'Spurs against Millwall.

Photos, P.I.P.

Tait, the 'Spurs Captain, who played a clever back game against Millwall.

matches at home had any influence on the result, for the victories were equally divided between those playing on their own ground and those who were engaged on foreign soil.

The Arsenal managed to score another victory; this time against Derby County. It was not such a brilliant performance as we have recently got from them, for they only

North End gained a splendid victory over Aston Villa, for though it was only 1 goal to nil, it must not be forgotten that the match was played at Aston Park. Bolton Wanderers, playing at home, gained the full points at the expense of Sheffield Wednesday, but it was only by 1 goal to nil after a hard game.

A remarkable win was that of

Notts County over Manchester City, the victory being gained by the handsome margin of 3 goals to nil. Stoke also had a large balance against Notts Forest, the Pottery club scoring 4 goals without reply from their rivals, and Sunderland had 3 goals to 1 the best of Birmingham City, the latter having evidently struck a bad patch since their defeat in the cup. Sheffield United and Bury met at Bramwell Lane, but the best the "blades" could do was to draw at 1 goal each. But they made a better show on Monday, when Wolver-

promotion, a slip on the part of the United might easily let in Chelsea. At present, however, the chances of the Manchester club are decidedly the better, as, though Chelsea lead them on points, they have the worst position on matches played.

The Southern League games were interesting. Curiously enough, Fulham, the leaders, could only draw with Watford, but Brentford did very well to beat Swindon by 3 goals to 1, and Brighton and Hove Albion shared the points with West Ham

spur avenged a defeat earlier in the season by beating Millwall by 3 goals to 1. The only other match in the competition was between Plymouth Argyle and New Brompton, the former winning by 5 goals to nil. It is worthy of note that in no case was the home team defeated.

The Corinthians' bill of fare at Queen's Club was a match with Northampton. The latter are not quite of the calibre that the famous amateur club usually tackle, but they assisted to put up a good game, although they were defeated by 5 goals to 2.

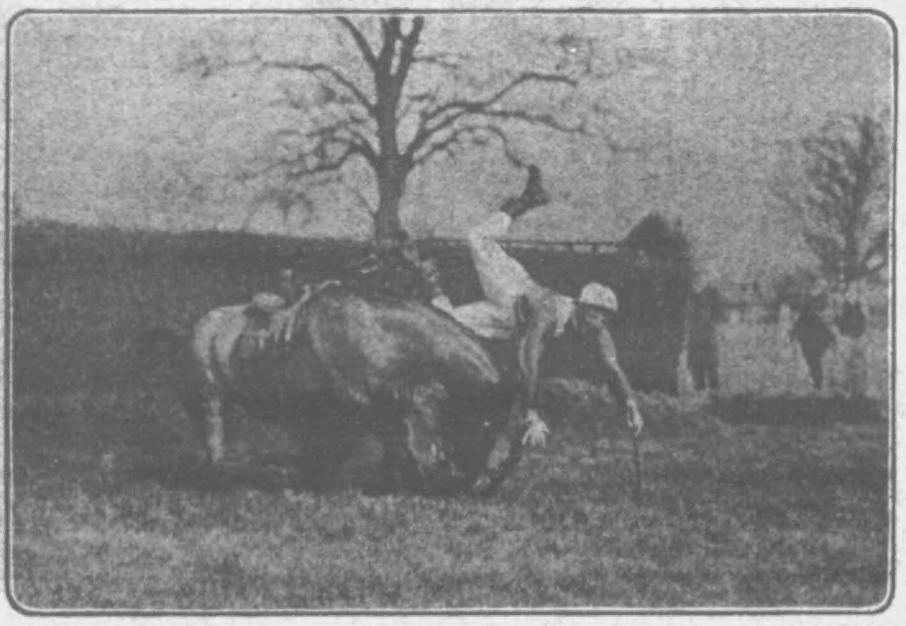
Scotland and Ireland opposed each other under Association rules at Dublin last Saturday, and the former, after having all the best of the game, won by 1 goal to nil. The 1 goal came from the foot of T. T. Fitchie, the Arsenal amateur, and the old Norwood boy played in great form throughout the match. On Monday England and Wales met at Cardiff, and again the margin was only 1 goal in favour of the winning side, the representatives of the Rose just pulling through. It was a piece of luck for England, as, after the first twenty minutes, Wales had but ten men, and S. H. Day only scored the winning point five minutes before time.

Photo, P.I.P.

ENGLAND v. SCOTLAND AT RICHMOND: The English Ladies won by 4 goals to 1. An English rush stopped.

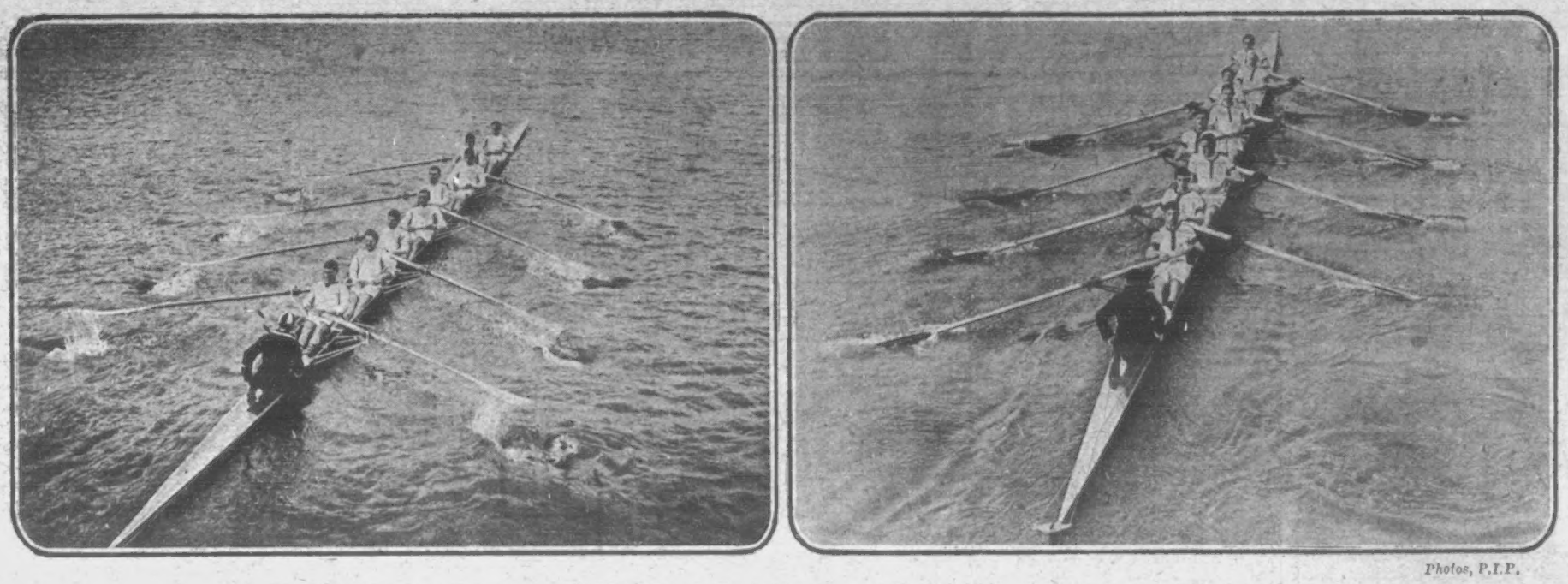
Photo, P.I.P.

England v. Scotland: Miss K. Rodger (England) makes a good centre.



Photo, P.I.P.

PERILS OF STEEPLECHASING: Lord Dalmeny has a spill in the Oakley Hunt Steeplechase. Cincinnatus falls at the open ditch, Hampton Park Steeplechase.



Photos, P.I.P.

PREPARING FOR THE BOATRACE : 1. Cambridge crew at Bourne End. 2. Oxford crew at Henley.

The Billiard Season and its Players.

By I. RICHARDS.

The billiard season fast drawing to a close has been the busiest and most important that our leading professional players have experienced for many years. Big tournaments, each costing its promoters from £1,500 to £2,000, have been run in London and Manchester; and, besides these, a large number of exhibition matches played in various parts of the British Isles.

At the head of the London competition is Mr. J. S. Burroughes, who

Billiards : John Roberts, the veteran player.

is known wherever the game is played. He is a "practical" man in everything that pertains to billiards; for, besides being the head of one of the largest firms in the trade, Mr. Burroughes went through the same training as an ordinary apprentice, and can build a table himself. He has travelled extensively, and has a seemingly inexhaustible fund of anecdotes to draw upon whenever he has a few companions round him.

The sporting world will be the poorer by the loss of one prominent figure when the season's curtain is rung down. John Roberts has announced his intention of retiring, and he will take no further part in tournaments nor money matches. The story of Roberts' professional career would be the history of modern billiards. It was through his refusing to play the "spot" stroke in his matches that this particular stroke—of which W. J. Peall was such a great master—was abolished. When Roberts started playing he found the game mixed up with gambling and the surroundings of the public-house, and by his great skill and determination raised it to its present favourable position, as the most popular and attractive indoor pastime.

Roberts still holds the "spot-barred" record with a break of 1,392, which he made against E. Diggle, at Manchester, on May 3rd and 4th, 1894, in the course of a match under the auspices of Messrs. Burroughes and Watts.

That the "old school" have admirers, who preferred their Bohemianism to the steadiness of the present-day players, was shown in a remark made to John Roberts by an old enthusiast while the former champion was playing in London recently: "It's many years since I first saw you play, Mr. Roberts," remarked the old spectator. "And we had some fine players in your early days! You remember So-and-So?" mentioning a once-famous expert. "Yes," answered Roberts. "Well," went on the old enthusiast, "there was a grand player for you! He could play a brilliant game *whether he was drunk or sober.*"

Those days are gone now. Professionals take their games seriously, and with a campaign of eight months to go through, during which they are playing almost every week, they have to take great care of their health. Roberts has given exhibitions of his skill in practically every part of the British Empire, and he will be greatly missed when he bids the billiard world adieu. He has played for forty years without ever being absent from an engagement except on one night when he was ill.

H. W. Stevenson and C. Dawson are the next two figures in the billiard ranks, and, while it is pleasant to watch the former making a big break with rapid and delicate play, Dawson shines in uphill battles, for the little Yorkshireman is a typical "bulldog" fighter.

A professional who would undoubtedly have run them close, had he not suffered from bad health, is E. Diggle, of Manchester. He is the "mathematical" player; but as he is not physically strong he cannot stand the wear and tear of playing so well as some of the others. Tall, silent, and reserved, Diggle can be very sarcastic when he likes. On one occasion, while playing in a match, someone stopped him to inquire how he had got on that afternoon. Diggle eyed his questioner for a minute, then, in a broad Lancashire dialect, said: "If you can't afford 2s. 6d. to see the game, just buy a ha'penny paper and read about it," and walked on.

Photo, P.I.P.

BILLIARDS: Stevenson, the famous professional.

F. H. Weiss, the Australian Champion and holder of the South African Shield, seems likely to win the Manchester Tournament, and when that is over, he is going on another tour through South Africa. Weiss is popular with everyone. He has a weakness for travelling long distances, and wears a smile on his good-humoured face that is broad enough to make an ordinary-sized person a suit.

C. Harverson seems to have "struck a bad patch" this season, and Melbourne Inman is the professional who has added most to his reputation. This young player has only Diggle to fear in the London Tournament, and he has included nearly all the best men of the day among his victims.

W. Cook, son of the old champion, at one time promised to continue the family reputation at the game; but he is in such demand as a teacher that his own play has naturally suffered, and his improvement has not been so rapid as his friends anticipated. Still he is young, has an easy, graceful style, and can play close cannons as well as anyone—and better than most.

T. Reece, of Oldham, has rather disappointed expectations. He is a brilliant player at times; but apparently he is possessed of a temperament that prevents him taking matters philosophically, with the result that he is seldom consistent. When in form he is a delightful player to watch, and with more self-control would hold a higher position in the billiard world than he does at present.

W. A. Lovejoy is the latest recruit to the professional ranks. He has done well all through the season, and with more experience in matches can look forward to the future with confidence.

BILLIARDS: 1.—Inman. 2.—Aiken. 3.—Diggle. 4.—Dawson.

Travels of a Crab.

A marked crab placed in the sea at Flamborough last summer by Professor Tosh, of the North-Eastern Sea Fisheries Commission, has been caught off Beadnell Point, Northumberland. It had travelled 108 miles in 114 days.

Cordingley's Motor-car Exhibition.

On Saturday, the 24th, Cordingley's motor-car exhibition will open at the Agricultural Hall, London, when nearly 300 exhibitors will demonstrate the progress made by the automobile on land, sea, and air. For in addition to motor-cars, 'buses, etc., there will be a large display of motor-boats and airships. All the leading British engineering firms seem to be entering the motor-car industry, and never before has such a complete representation of this section of English enterprise been brought together.

P. I. P. PLAYGOER.

The following is the cast of "The Man from Blankley's," by Mr. F. Anstey, which will be produced at the Haymarket Theatre to-morrow (Saturday).

Lord Strathpeffer: Mr. Charles Hawtrey.
Mr. Montague Tidmarsh: Mr. Weedon Grossmith.
Mr. Gabriel Gilwattle: Mr. Henry Kemble.
Mr. Toomer: Mr. Welton Dale.

Miss Lily Brayton as "Isabella" in "Measure for Measure," produced last Tuesday at the Adelphi Theatre.

Mr. Jeremiah Ditchwater: Mr. E. Holman Clark.
Mr. Nathaniel Bodfish: Mr. H. Laurent.
Mr. Poffley: Mr. Aubrey Fitzgerald.
Dawes: Mr. Arthur Playfair.
Mrs. Montague Tidmarsh: Miss Fanny Brough.
Mrs. Gilwattle: Miss Alice Mansfield.
Mrs. Ditchwater: Miss Gwynne Herbert.
Mrs. Bodfish: Miss Lydia Rachel.
Miss Bugle: Miss G. Ewell.
Miss Cecilia Flinders: Miss Maud Wynter.
Miss Marjory Seaton: Miss Dagmar Wiehe.
Jane: Miss Muriel Alston.
Hannah: Miss Mary Leslie.

This cast, as will be seen, is as excellent a one as either money or experience could provide, and Mr. Harrison is to be warmly congratulated on the pains he has taken to secure so excellent a combination.

The play was, of course, at the very height of its popularity when Mr. Hawtrey's American engagement compelled its withdrawal. It is interesting to note that Mr. Grossmith now takes up the part which was originally drawn for him, but which, on the production of the play, he was unable to assume.

"The audience is requested to keep their seats and sit tight through the most thrilling scenes, and be sure to laugh in the right place." This was only one of many notes printed on the programme of "A-Lad-In and Well Out of It," a "strictly children's pantomime," produced one afternoon last week at Drury Lane Theatre. It was the drollest little affair imaginable, and was played in the ballet-room of the famous theatre. All the characters were played by the children of the company nightly appearing in the pantomime of "Cinderella," and last week's performance, to which they did not invite the critics, was, in the opinion of the fathers and mothers and the general company present, a greater success than either "Nero" or "His House in Order."

Neither of the latter plays had such a sand-dance to show as was given last week, and Master Jack Frost, the call-boy in the theatre (who privately entertains a deep love for Miss May de Sousa), was understood by the ten-year-old critics in the audience to be at the top of the profession. There was a tiny boy in the audience in full fireman's uniform, carrying a hatchet in case of emergency, and another boy made up to caricature Mr. Sidney Smith, the business manager of Drury Lane Theatre. With the exception of Master Frost, who played the Widow Twankey, and Master Teddy Gordon, the Slave of the Lamp, all the parts were performed by little girls, one of whom, Miss Winnie Clark, arranged all the dances.

Photo, Lallie Charles.

MISS MAY STUART (daughter of Leslie Stuart, the composer), who is to play with Edna May in "The Belle of Mayfair" at the Vaudeville.

Photo, Lallie Charles.

MISS ETHEL MATTHEWS, playing in "All-of-a-Sudden Peggy" at the Duke of York's Theatre.

Sir Charles Wyndham revived "The Candidate" at Wyndham's Theatre on Wednesday last.

The following is the full cast of this interesting revival:—

Lord Lancelot Oldacre: Sir Charles Wyndham.
Alaric Baffin (his college chum and secretary): Mr Dennis Eadie.
Capt. the Hon. Villiers Hazelfort: Mr. Yorke Stephens.
Barnabas Goodeve: Mr. Rutland Barrington.
Amos Martlett: Mr. Edmund Maurice.
Jacobs: Mr. Bertram Steer.
Lady Osterley: Miss Helen Ferrers; Lady Clarissa Oldacre: Miss Sybill Carlisle; and Lady Dorothy Osterley: Miss June Van Buskirk (her daughters).
Mrs Sophonia Martlett: Miss Lilias Waldegrave.

One of the most startling tabloid melodramas ever conceived was produced at the London Hippodrome on Monday last, "The Flood"—described as a miniature Johnstown disaster, which took place in 1901—is produced by its inventor, Mr. Frank Parker. It is sufficiently realistic enough to satisfy the greediest appetite for sensation, when it is considered that, in the midst of a rural mountain scene of lightness and festivity, a sudden terrible storm arises, and all that was bright and happy is now plunged into Stygian darkness, and in one fell swoop the whole village, human beings, horses, cottages, everything, is swept away by a deluge of real water through the bursting of a dam on the top of a mountain. Such a scene of indescribable terror has never been placed upon any stage. This is all caused by 300,000 gallons of water from the Hippodrome being let loose all in a moment. The book has been written by Arthur Shirley, with music by Clarence C. Corri.

The offer recently made by the management of the Alhambra, of a Grand Gala Performance in aid of the Lord Mayor's fund for the relief of the prevailing destitution in Japan—an almost inevitable aftermath of our noble ally's strenuous struggle for security, and one which demonstrated to the full "the five noble qualities of Japanese character: bravery, loyalty, alertness, thoroughness, and self-control"—has not only been accepted by our first magistrate, but is to enjoy the patronage of the Japanese Ambassador. The date of the occasion, which is surely one to be kept with unusual honours, will be shortly announced, together with particulars of the entertainment to be provided.

Mr. J. M. Barrie's new play for the Haymarket Theatre is likely to be seen before the end of March. A good deal of secrecy exists as to the form it will take and also regarding the character that Mr. Charles Hawtrey will be called upon to assume. The personnel of the company to be engaged to support Mr. Hawtrey is now practically settled, to the entire satisfaction of Mr. Barrie, who, like Mr. Pinero, insists upon personally engaging each person who is to represent a character in a play by him.

Mr. Isidore de Lara's new opera, "Sanga," has proved an immense success at Nice, it being performed for the fourth time recently before a brilliant and enthusiastic audience. The interest of the story centres around a mountain, which dominates the lives of those living on its slopes, the old Greek idea of Nemesis being forcibly illustrated. The construction of the drama is original and of the most poignant description. In the second act only one character appears, that of Sanga. The third act ends in a cataclysm engulfing the whole of the characters. The music marks a distinct advance in the composer's career, and is generally of the most dramatic description. The orchestration is admirable, and far beyond anything achieved in his former works, which include "The Light of Asia," "Amy Robsart," "Messaline," and "Moina." The first three of these have already been performed at Covent Garden.

Mr. Butt has made an extra-specially attractive engagement at the Palace Theatre. One of the brightest "singing comediennes" upon our stage is Miss Carrie Moore, late of "The Blue Moon." She can sing, she can dance, she can act, she has a delicious little twinkle in her eye. Of all these the Palace will shortly have the advantage. Miss Moore will sing a song from "The Blue Moon," and also, in alliance with the ever-charming Palace Girls (who are a "standing dish" at the Palace, and long may they continue in the menu!) will show us how the "cake walk" is danced in America, London, Paris, Berlin, and Holland. It should be a most enlivening "turn."

The Americans have no love for Scotch songs. They cannot make head nor tail of the language, and they are frank enough to confess it. In Chicago Watkins Mills was called upon by a handful of Scotchmen to sing Hatton's rollicking ditty, "The Marriage of Shon Maclean," but when the song was over the applause came exclusively from the men who had demanded it. The other members of the audience looked blankly at the singer and wondered to gracious what on earth he had been "talking about." "What does he mean by 'every piper was fu''?" asked a puzzled Chicagoan of one of the Scotchmen in the interval. "'Fu'' means 'full,'" was the reply. "Well," snapped the practical and unpicturesque native of the pork country, "and what's the matter with the whole word, anyhow?"

Photo, Ellis & Walery.

MISS MARIE TEMPEST, who is playing the name part in "All-of-a-Sudden Peggy" at the Duke of York's Theatre.

THE WORLD OF WOMEN.

Light Spring Wraps.

With a coat and skirt costume of smart tailor-made type most women, whom this style of dressing suits, deem themselves well equipped for Spring. A loose, warm wrap, however, is not to be despised, and three-quarter coats of white serge are sure to be popular, as they can be worn over any dark skirt. Facings in pale blue or pale grey cloth lend a touch of distinction, especially in the case of double-breasted coats, which boast buttons to match. A loose coat presents so many advantages, that few would care to forego the comfort of one, and although the Empire and tight-fitting basqued coats are in the front rank of favour, the former will continually remain in vogue, by the aid of a few concessions to the style of the moment. Thus I note that the coat sleeve proper, a plain sleeve standing off from the shoulder with a slight fulness, is pre-eminent just now in all loose three-quarter coats, even those with pretentions to special smartness. The cape sleeve is seen on more dressy models, and very pretty are the wraps without sleeves, with a somewhat shawl-like arrangement of drapery, having four points back and front and falling over the arms. This form is delightfully graceful for evening wear.

Photo, Advance.

Miss M. M. Pole, one of the chief Lady Sanitary Inspectors of the City, who has been appointed to visit mothers in the slums and instruct them on the rearing of infants.

Cheap Skirts.

For those who desire a dainty skirt for afternoon wear, a sun-ray pleated skirt made in canvas voile should prove ideal. The cost is only 7s. 11d., and is quite a bargain at the price, navy blue being, perhaps, the most effective of the range of colours obtainable. For street wear there are some pretty cloth skirts, made with pleats on the hips, and with novel bands of trimming at the knee and foot; in two styles, each being remarkably cheap at 8s. 11d. and 10s. 11d. respectively. Another pretty inexpensive skirt, for which there will be ample opportunity of donning later on, is fashioned of French voile, and mounted on glacé silk. This in either white or black could not fail to make a useful addition to any wardrobe. Made with a slightly gauged hip piece, it has a full flounce trimmed with silk frills applied in Vandyke form. The skirt is really very elaborate in appearance for the price, 23s. 11d., and worn with a coloured blouse makes a charming costume.

Theatre Wraps.

Many charming coats are now being sold to combine the double purpose of day and evening wear. It is a popular fallacy for women with a moderate dress allowance to imagine they effect a saving by investing in some garment which can serve double duty, but I think there are few women who have tried the experiment who have not been forced to own it has ended in something like failure. We will suppose a sum of between three and four guineas to be at such a woman's disposal wherewith to purchase an evening cloak and a spring wrap for the street and calling when winter clothes are finally thrown aside. Now a very nice long cloak, in a light or dark shade, silk lined, with a high collar and little cape edged with swansdown or feather trimming, can be purchased for a guinea and a half, and, though certainly not as smart as a theatre coat costing between three and four guineas, it is dainty and suitable enough for most occasions. Spend another thirty shillings on a tailor-made three-quarter coat in white serge, or serge of some pretty and becoming art colour such as turquoise blue, and you will have far more pleasure and use out of it than you could possibly have by taking a smart coat, designed for restaurant wear, into daily and ordinary use. As a matter of fact, coats for the double purpose of day and evening wear usually prove, to persons of limited means, too smart to convert to day wear at all, and thus the would-be economiser finds she has really spent considerably more than she can afford upon one garment, and must, in consequence, do without one equally necessary, and which she had fondly imagined would be embodied in the first-named. And to become victimised out of a laudable desire to effect a saving is doubly trying.

Photo, Illustrations Bureau.

THEATRE BEHIND THE SCENES: Pantomime by children in Drury Lane ballet room.

Photo, Whitlock.

MISS MAUDE DARRELL: The latest portrait of this charming actress who made a great hit in "The Beauty of Bath" last Monday.

House Fabrics.

Now is the time when spring cleaning holds its awful sway, and it behoves us to renovate our house furnishings. Very beautiful are the chintzes and cretonnes now being displayed. They are particularly adapted for bedroom, nursery, or drawing-room. A nursery I have seen lately, and which wholly charmed me, had a mantel border and short casement curtains of chintz in a design of daisy chains. A very simple pink edging, costing about twopence a yard, was used for a border, and, as the chintz itself cost only a shilling or two a yard, the total outlay was comparatively small. Chintz also has the merit of lasting clean for a considerable time, and casement curtains can be drawn aside when the windows are opened.

Miss Decima Brooke, the clever little lady who is appearing with great success at the Coliseum.

Steamed Plaice.

Fillet a nice fresh plaice, roll each fillet, and tie with thread. Lay these rolls in an old soup plate, season with pepper and salt, and put another soup plate over. Let the fish cook in its own steam either in the oven or over a saucepan of boiling water for about half an hour. Take the rounds and put on a hot dish, remove the threads, and keep covered; while into the juice which is left in the plate stir a little flour moistened with cold milk and a pinch of parsley. Stir the sauce till it boils and pour over the fish.

Little Jam Turnovers.

Required: Puff paste, some thick jam, one white of egg, caster sugar.

Roll out the pastry to the thickness of a penny, and with a small round cutter shape out slabs one inch and a half across. In the centre of these put a spoonful of thick jam, and cover with a similar round of pastry, after wetting the edges to make them stick. Press with the handle of a teaspoon to make a pattern round, brush over with white of egg, and dust caster sugar over. Bake nicely and serve cold.

Ginger Wine

All the ingredients in this are put together cold, and no cooking is necessary in the whole process of making. To every gallon of cold water add three pounds and a quarter of loaf sugar, one ounce and a half of bruised ginger, two lemons, one sweet orange and two bitter. Pare the oranges and lemons very thinly. Squeeze all the fruit. Put the juice and peel into a barrel, also one ounce of split raisins to every gallon. Do not quite fill the cask at first, and stir it well till the sugar is dissolved (two or three days). Then add a little yeast. Do not stir again, but in about a week fill the cask and cork it up. This will be ready to bottle in three or four months.

Photo, Rahuton.

THE ONLY LADY MASTER OF OTTER HOUNDS: Mrs. W. Cheesman, Master of the Crowhurst Otter Hounds. This is her fourth season; her opening meeting takes place in the first week in April.

OUR GRAND NEW SERIAL STORY.

THE GREAT PLOT.

BY

WILLIAM LE QUEUX.

Mr. Milbourne, the sporting squire of Ailesworth Manor, in Huntingdonshire, has three daughters, Nella, Ethel, and Sylvia. Nella is engaged to marry Douglas Kenyon, while Sylvia, a girl of seventeen, is deeply in love with Dr. Guy Wingate, a match which her family will not countenance. While she is relating her troubles to her companion, she is summoned to the room of her uncle, Austen Leigh, the famous traveller and scientist, who is dangerously ill. The old man struggles to tell her something, but cannot.

"Sylvia!" he gasps. "The Great Ishak! See! In there!" And he points towards a battered tin box. "Hide it!—hide it—or—or death! Death! Ah——"

Slowly the muscles of his countenance relax, his jaw drops. Austen Leigh, the great traveller and Arabic scholar, is dead.

CHAPTER III.

Austen Leigh's Treasures.

The opinion of Dr. Walker, who arrived half an hour after Austen Leigh's decease, was that death was due to angina pectoris, and, a certificate being given to that effect, there was no necessity for a coroner's inquiry. Walker had attended the unfortunate man ever since his return to civilisation, and had always held the conviction that the end would be sudden.

Photo, Warneuke.

Cameron of Lochiel, who is to marry Lady Hermione Graham next Thursday.

Therefore the dead traveller was interred in the sloping graveyard of Castor Church, and, although many attended the funeral, perhaps the person who felt the keenest grief was poor, neglected Sylvia, the only member of the family with whom he had cared to hold converse.

On the day following the funeral the dead man's effects were overhauled for the purpose of discovering whether he had left any will, and if any clue could be found to the extent of his property. He had always been in possession of adequate funds, yet he had never spoken to either his sister or brother-in-law of his financial position; hence both the old Squire and his wife were naturally curious to ascertain the true state of affairs. When a man is a little eccentric, and when years of his life have been hidden in mystery and his whereabouts unknown, gossip generally credits him with being wealthy. It was so in Leigh's case.

Assisted by Mr. Tarbutt, the lawyer of Peterborough, Mrs. Milbourne, and Sylvia, the Squire made a thorough search of the dead man's effects, revealing a state of things quite unexpected. In all sorts of holes and corners, in books, and beneath drawers, they found various documents—some relating to the adventurous period of his life, and others, being in Arabic, could not be deciphered. But within half an hour the solicitor was able to definitely declare that there was an estate evidently consisting of rather valuable house property in Paddington, as well as considerable invested funds. The will then became the object of interest, but it could not be found.

Sylvia related how her uncle, before his death, had struggled to reach the battered box, and, no key being forthcoming, a chisel was sent for, and the lawyer forced it open.

Then, seating himself at the table where the dead man had spent so many hours of his life, Mr. Tarbutt, most methodical of men, proceeded to cursorily examine the mass of papers it contained. The casket was a kind of dispatch-box of the old-fashioned sort, with three tin trays, the first two being filled by papers neatly arranged and tied together, and the bottom compartment containing a quantity of very fine antique jewellery of Oriental design and delicate workmanship. He had no doubt collected it during his travels, for in a piece of tissue paper were wrapped several uncut emeralds and rubies of unusual size, and no doubt of value.

"Pity we cannot find any disposition of the deceased gentleman's property," remarked the lawyer, removing his gold pince-nez in order to wipe them.

"Don't believe he ever made one," said the old Squire bluntly. "He thought of nothing except of his Arabs and all their hieroglyphics. But I must say I never thought he had more than a couple of sixpences to chink together."

"There are first-class securities here worth quite twenty thousand pounds at the very least," observed the lawyer, returning to the search. "But," he added, "he seemed most eccentric, and we may find a will in some odd corner yet, if we have patience."

"I hope we will," declared the Squire with something of a sneer. "Perhaps he wrote it in Arabic among all that mass of rubbish. Who knows?!"

"One thing has certainly aroused my curiosity," the lawyer said as he bent to examine a small square of crisp old parchment which he had found tightly rolled in the bottom of the box. He had spread it before him, placing a weight on either side to keep it out flat, but for some minutes had been making a minute examination.

The yellow parchment, about eight inches square, was stained by dark patches of damp, and was covered by a mass of apparently Arabic writing evenly penned by a careful scribe, and possibly of great age. The ink used was gold, but the damp had somewhat tarnished it; in parts, indeed, the writing had almost entirely disappeared. Without doubt it was some document of considerable importance as an antiquity from the fact that he had taken equal care of it with the gems and jewellery. Mr. Tarbutt's curiosity had been aroused for several reasons. Anything upon parchment appeals to the legal mind; and, secondly, a document so well taken care of must be of importance.

The Squire and Sylvia stood leaning over the lawyer's shoulder gazing upon the puzzling lines of curious writing, but neither could decipher one single word.

"I suppose lots of clever people up in London could read that off just as easily as a newspaper," remarked old Mr. Milbourne, also seized by curiosity. "We had better get it translated and see what it's all about. You must see what you can do, Tarbutt."

"Very well," said the lawyer. "I don't anticipate any great difficulty. Arabic will be an easy task to a scholar. As you say, we ought to ascertain what it is. Probably it is some valuable document which should be in a museum. That's my private opinion. But we will see."

The lawyer was rather reluctant, however, to put it aside. He held it nearer the light and examined line after line, held it level with his eyes in order to see whether what looked like Arabic merely concealed some words in English. But in vain. It defied elucidation.

"Come, Sylvia," said the Squire chaffingly, "you were your uncle's companion, can't you suggest any place where his will might be? He may have left you something. He ought to have done, if he hasn't."

"I know he made one," replied the girl, "for one evening when I came up as usual to see him I found him very busy writing, and he told me that he was making his will, and wanted to be alone. So I left him."

"Then who witnessed it?" queried the lawyer. "Possibly one of the servants."

"No," replied Mrs. Milbourne; "I have questioned them all. No one in the house acted as witness."

"Uncle went up to London a few days afterwards," Sylvia remarked.

"Went to his solicitors most likely, and signed it at their office," suggested Mr. Tarbutt. "We really ought to be able to discover who were his legal advisers. Yet, so far as I've seen, there's no clue to his solicitor."

They spent a full hour in searching in every hole and corner of the dead man's rooms, but without success. Indeed, they were just about to relinquish their anxious investigation with a feeling that twenty thousand pounds or so were slipping through somebody's fingers, when Sylvia suddenly recollected that on one occasion she had seen her uncle replacing the parchment cover, or drum-head, of an old earthenware tom-tom of Arab make.

It was in the form of a big jar, gaudily painted, and was suspended from a nail in the wall. Eagerly she took it down and shook it. Something rattled inside.

In an instant she ripped it open, and within, sure enough, was a document, which Mr. Tarbutt at once pronounced to be the missing will.

Written upon a single sheet of foolscap, it had been witnessed by two men living at Peterborough—one a carrier and the other a plumber—and, having been found entirely in order by the lawyer, he commenced to read it.

The dead traveller left all his trophies, maps, papers, books, diaries, and manuscripts to the Royal Geographical Society. "The jewels, and also the roll of parchment which will be found in the same place," the will continued, "I bequeath to my niece, Nella Milbourne; to each of my two nieces, Ethel Milbourne and Sylvia Milbourne, I bequeath one thousand pounds, and to my sister, Esther Georgina Milbourne, I give and bequeath all the remainder of my property of whatsoever I die possessed."

Endorsed upon the will was the name of a well-known firm of solicitors in Bedford Row, in whose hands the affairs of the deceased man had undoubtedly been.

"Well," grunted the bluff old Squire, "that seems very satisfactory, after all, Tarbutt. Austen was a queer fellow, but he was a careful man, it seems. I wonder why he hid his will in that old drum?"

"The reason of that is at present a mystery," the lawyer responded.

"Why," cried Sylvia, as a sudden idea occurred to her, "I see it all now! It was not the box to which poor uncle was pointing just before he died; it was at that old instrument, which hung just behind it. He wanted to direct my attention to it there."

"But why did he utter that extraordinary warning?" queried the lawyer. "To me there is something very uncanny about those words of his."

"His mind was wandering, perhaps," suggested the dead man's sister. "Poor fellow, he was a great sufferer," she added.

The day being wet, Nella and Ethel were doing needlework in the morning-room when Sylvia burst in upon them to inform them of their good fortune.

"Then Uncle Austen was, after all, a regular brick!" exclaimed Nella, a tall, good-looking girl of twenty-six, with that rather waxen complexion which generally accompanies auburn hair. "I must see my jewels. Are they anything one can wear?"

"Of course, Why, they're lovely!" declared Sylvia. But scarcely had she spoken when the two elder girls dashed from the room and ran upstairs to see and hear for themselves.

When the first excitement had died down, Mr. Tarbutt readjusted his gold pince-nez and set himself to more closely examine the securities. It did not take long to show that the investments were, almost without exception, good ones, and that, although the deceased had lived half his life outside the limits of civilisation, he nevertheless knew a good deal about financial matters. In all probability his solicitors had acted for him in his absence, but, if so, they had, Mr. Tarbutt thought, shown considerable foresight.

"I consider it a very remarkable—indeed, an almost romantic—affair," he added. "To tell the truth, I cannot help thinking that the small roll of parchment which we found concealed with the jewels, and which is specially mentioned in the will, contains some extraordinary secret. What it is, of course, remains to be ascertained."

CHAPTER IV.

A Woman's Triumph.

Six months had passed.

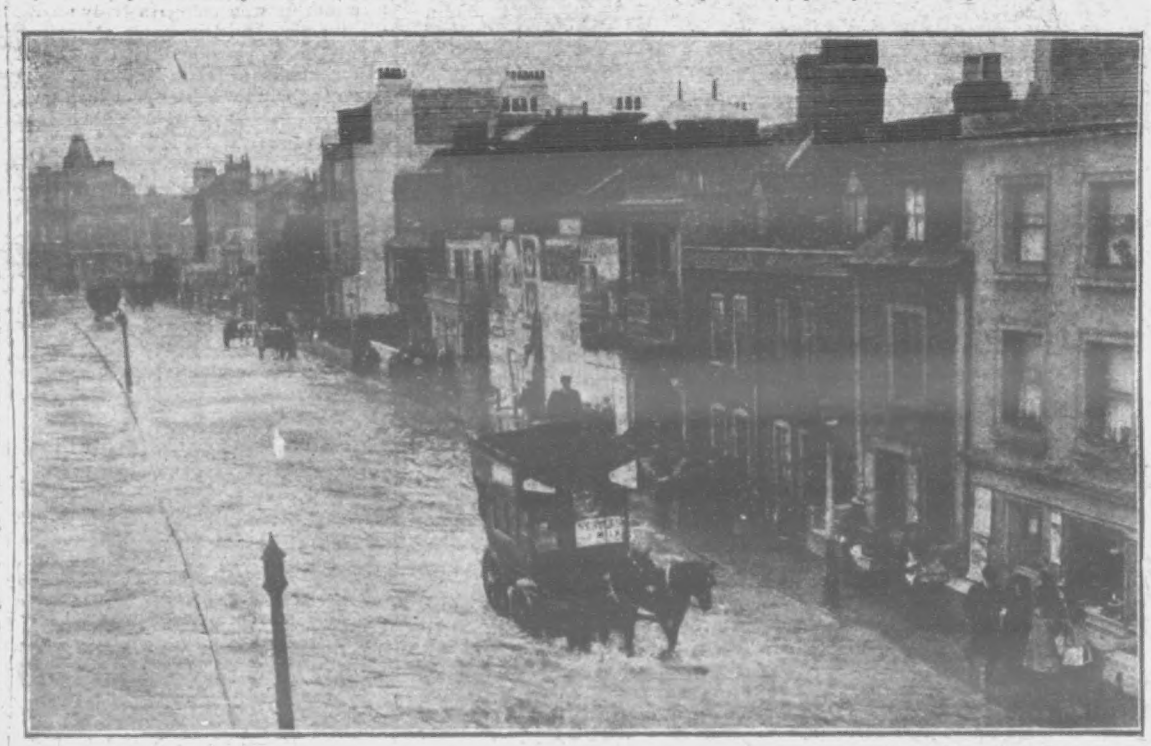
The long engagement between Nella Milbourne, the old Squire's eldest daughter, and Douglas Kenyon was arranged to culminate in matrimony, and the Manor, as well as the villages of Ailesworth and Castor, were agog in consequence. The wedding of the Squire's daughter always creates a local enthusiasm, and in this case, as Nella was to be married at the village church instead of in London, as the gossips had long asserted, the excitement rose to fever heat.

Weddings have been so often described that it is superfluous to describe this one in detail. Nella made an extremely handsome bride. The colour of her hair was unusual, her carriage was easy and majestic, her figure was well proportioned, and her dress, of ivory satin with old lace, the present of her father, was a costly and handsome one. In addition to the diamond necklet given her by Kenyon, she wore some of the valuable Oriental jewellery found among her dead uncle's effects and bequeathed to her.

Douglas Kenyon was an easy-going man of means, aged about thirty-two. Left a fair income by his father, who had amassed a fortune in the manufacture of agricultural implements at Grantham, he had lived for some years in a large, old-fashioned house just outside the quiet, sleepy town of Stamford, a place which even the railway has left undisturbed, and the echoes of whose pebbles are only awakened on market days.

Kenyon was by no means a drone Erect, spruce, and clean-shaven, he had been in the Navy, and served as lieutenant in the Mediterranean and Channel Fleets, until on the death of his father his mother induced him to resign his commission, return home, and settle down on the property to the life of the country gentleman. He had already been home four years before he had met and fallen in love with Nella, and then, when the engagement was announced, Mrs. Kenyon had taken a house in London, and her son's place had been thoroughly renovated and re-furnished in preparation to receive its new mistress.

The church at Castor looked its best and brightest that morning in early spring. Nella, flushed and handsome beneath her veil and wreath of orange blossoms, was, of course, led to the altar by the old Squire, while a friend of Kenyon's, a Mr. Hubert Hutton, acted as his best



Photo, Illustrations Bureau.

THE THAMES IN FLOOD: A quaint scene in the High Street, Barnes

Photo, Knight.

The Tallest Drum-Major in the British Army: Sergeant-Drummer Horne, of the Royal Welsh Fusileers, who stands 6ft. 4½ins. in his socks.

man.' The latter was a pleasant fellow, and essentially a gentleman. The Milbournes, save Nella, knew very little of him. He had been introduced to Nella some months before by her *fiancé*, and they had met casually on several occasions. He was, Douglas had told her, a man of leisure, who spent the greater part of his life on the Continent, and who made his headquarters in a pretty little flat in the busy Rue Lafayette in Paris. Kenyon had known him a good many years, and when in England he had frequently invited him down to stay at Casterton House. Indeed, Nella had heard a lot about Hutton's good qualities from her lover, and was therefore delighted that he should assist at the ceremony.

He was tall, grey-eyed, and slightly hollow-faced, his thinness being accentuated by his tightly-buttoned frock-coat. His garments were well cut, but in that unmistakable style which showed them to be the product of a Paris tailor, his lavender gloves fitted without a wrinkle, and his silk hat was of a shape which, although fashionable on the Poulevards, had not yet made its appearance in Bond Street. He was usually elegantly dressed, and was never seen without a flower in his lappel, but on this occasion, to do honour to his friend Kenyon and to Nella, he eclipsed himself.

Nella, the only member of the Squire's family who really knew him, liked him. What Douglas had told her long ago was quite correct. He was a thorough cosmopolitan of charming manner, and altogether an excellent fellow at heart, notwithstanding his outwardly dandified appearance.

The mellow old organ had broken forth into Mendelssohn's "Wedding March," and Nella, leaning on her husband's arm, laughing and happy, had trod over the flowers strewn in her path by the village children.

The wedding breakfast was a brilliant affair. The oak-panelled dining-room at the Manor, a big old room, was filled to overflowing, and, as usual on such occasions, the fun was fast and furious. The old Squire was in fine form, joking with everyone, and highly pleased at the successful issue of the wedding arrangements, while among the guests was the Squire of Lyddington, whose wit and humour was locally proverbial and a number of women in their best frills and furbelows.

At a little distance down the table sat Mrs. Milbourne, and at her right hand Mr. Hubert Hutton, the bridegroom's best man. The young dandy was talking vivaciously with his hostess; indeed, such a good conversationalist was he that the Squire's wife was at once compelled to admit within herself that in putting him down as an over-dressed "bounder" she had done him a great injustice.

Sylvia, however, like most young girls, was a shrewd and critical observer. Few things escaped her, and while the others were gossipping, laughing, and raising their glasses in honour to the newly-wedded pair, she sat watching the man who, although he had called at the Manor twice before, was a comparative stranger.

He was talking with her mother, replying to some question she had put to him regarding his wanderings about Europe, when of a sudden Mrs. Milbourne casually remarked:

"My brother, Mr. Austen Leigh, was a great traveller. He had journeyed in Turkestan, Siberia, and also a great deal in the Sahara, and received the medal of the Royal Geographical Society."

Hutton started slightly and looked Mrs. Milbourne full in the face.

"Leigh!" he repeated. "Austen Leigh? And was he actually your brother?"

"Yes. But have you met him?"

The young man paused, then responded:

"Once. I—I knew very little of him. Where is he now?"

"He lived with us here for some time until his death, which occurred suddenly about six months ago."

"Dead!" he cried. "Leigh is dead!"

"Unfortunately, yes. My brother was not an old man, but the various changes of climate he had encountered undermined his constitution," she replied, adding with quick interest, "Under what circumstances have you met? Tell me."

"We met some time ago, at a hotel in Aix-les-Bains," was the vague answer. "Of course, your brother's fame as a traveller is well known. Curious that I should have missed the announcement of his death in the papers, for I suppose they gave obituary notices."

"Some of them did."

Hutton was again silent for some moments, then he asked:

"After your brother's death were his papers examined?"

"Yes, by my husband and his solicitor. Poor Austen left a will in favour of myself."

"And into whose hands did those papers pass?" inquired the young man, with an eagerness which he was unable to suppress.

"I have some of them. But all those relating to his travels were handed over, according to his will, to the Royal Geographical Society."

"Did you examine the journals to ascertain their contents?"

"Yes, casually. My husband assisted me. They proved to be a bewildering mass of notes upon various subjects as well as upon travel."

"Only those relating to his travels were handed over to the society, I think you said?" he remarked, the expression of his face showing the tension of his mind.

"Exactly. The others I have kept."

"And they are still in your possession?"

"Certainly. But why do you ask?" inquired his hostess, now surprised at his undisguised eagerness.

"Well, I have a reason in asking," he replied, with a sorry attempt at a smile.

"Then I gather that you were interested in my brother and knew him rather better than you will admit?"

"I was much interested in him," he responded. "We were both travellers, and on certain subjects had many views in common. But, really, I had no idea that you were Austen Leigh's sister, and that Miss Nella—or Mrs. Kenyon, as we must call her now—is actually Austen Leigh's niece."

And he bent and looked along the table to where the radiant bride was sitting with her husband, and fixed his eyes long and steadily upon her.

His strange look of surprise and alarm did not pass unnoticed by Sylvia, who had been glancing furtively across at him for some time. As his eyes fell upon the bride, he started perceptibly, and the hand lying upon the table-cloth clenched itself tightly. His brows contracted, his lips moved as though he were speaking to himself, and his thin, hollow countenance went paler.

The reason why sight of Nella should so affect him sorely puzzled Sylvia. She scented mystery in it, and mystery always attracted her. It seemed as though the stranger had suddenly discovered in her sister some striking resemblance to someone he had known, and that the revelation had caused within him a sudden revulsion of feeling. The look that rested upon his face for a few moments was a distinctly evil one.

But his hostess was speaking again, and he was compelled to turn to her. He responded mechanically, scarce knowing what he said, for he had looked upon her daughter for the first time in light of the truth and the sight of her held him spell bound.

"Mrs. Milbourne," he managed to gasp at last in a low voice, scarcely above a whisper, "I know what I am about to say will sound very curious to you, but I would beg of you to make me a promise. I ask it because upon your action and your secrecy depends the happiness—nay, the life—of two persons, who, although unknown to you, will never cease rendering you their thanks for your protection."

"A promise!" echoed the Squire's wife, much puzzled. "I don't follow you."

"Let me be brief," he said quickly, bending to her and looking earnestly into her eyes. "I want you to promise to lock Leigh's papers away secretly and let no one see them. Seal them carefully in a packet and hide them lest their contents are divulged. If other persons obtain a knowledge of what is written there, it will mean death. Do you understand?—death!"

"You are really most alarming, Mr. Hutton," the elderly lady said with an endeavour to laugh. "I really did not think my poor brother's papers were of the least importance. True, some of them are written in the characters of a foreign language, so that I've never been able to make head nor tail of half of them."

"Has anyone else tried?"

"Mr. Tarbutt, the lawyer of Peterborough."

"Ah! country lawyers we need not

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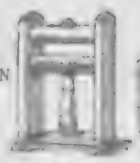

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fear," he exclaimed quickly. "Who else?"

"Only my husband."

Hubert Hutton breathed more freely. If, as he hoped, none of the important papers were sent to the Geographical Society, then it seemed as if the secret had, up to the present, been kept. The secret! Ah! and what a secret! One which, if divulged, would startle the whole world.

Already he was racking his brains to devise a plan for obtaining the papers from his hostess, but, at the same time, he was compelled to admit that he had not acted with his usual discretion in explaining the value of the documents.

Again he bent and looked at the newly-wedded bride. Yes. He was not mistaken.

It was necessary for him to act. In half an hour she would start with her husband upon her honeymoon to the Riviera, for they were to leave by the half-past four train from Peterborough, and already he had overheard one of the bridesmaids remark that it was time she retired to put on her travelling-dress.

"I wonder, Mrs. Milbourne, if you would excuse me if I went out for a few minutes into the air," he managed to articulate. "The unexpected news of your brother's death has upset me—and—and the room is rather warm."

His hostess, noticing the pallor of his countenance, gave her consent and evinced considerable concern, but he merely smiled, staggered to his feet, and left the room.

A moment later the bride rose and followed him.

CHAPTER V.
Mystery.

Nella had been absent perhaps ten minutes, and the mirth of the wedding breakfast was at its height. The two bridesmaids had risen when the bride had left the table, but Mrs. Milbourne had declared that there was still plenty of time and they had re-seated themselves at her request.

Of a sudden, however, there sounded through the house a piercing scream, and next instant a frightened maid-servant dashed into the room crying:

"Miss Nella! Oh! poor Miss Nella. Help! Help!"

"What's the matter?" demanded the Squire anxiously, while in an instant every voice was hushed.

"Poor Miss Nella! She's—she's dead!"

"Dead!" gasped the guests in the same breath, and the men sprang to their feet and rushed out.

"Surely she's only fainted!" cried Mrs. Milbourne in distress. "Oh! go and see, someone. Tell me the truth instantly!"

"Mr. Kenyon's friend is with her," exclaimed another of the maids. "He says she's dead, and that we were to tell you, mum. Oh! It's awful!"

Kenyon was the first man out of the room, and, dashing across the big hall, he saw at the top of the square, old-fashioned staircase his young wife lying prostrate, and, bending over her, supporting her head, was his friend, Hubert Hutton.

"God! Hubert!" he cried, springing up the stairs two steps at a time. "What's happened?"

"A tragedy," was the other's response in a hard, dry voice, as though he with difficulty suppressed the conflicting emotions within him.

"What do you mean? Tell me."

For answer his friend withdrew his hand from behind the prostrate bride and held it out with the palm towards him.

There was blood upon it.

"Your poor wife, Douglas, has been murdered."

"Murdered!" gasped the amazed man, who only a moment before had been making merry over his own nuptials. "Impossible!"

"Unfortunately it is so," responded Hutton, in the hearing of all the other guests who, pale-faced and [illegible] had crowded round. "She has been killed with this!" And he took up from beside him a long, thin Italian poignard, a mediæval weapon with cross-hilt and pierced blade, which had blood upon it.

"Why," cried Grace Fairbairn, "that knife has always hung upon that nail there, over your head."

"I brought it from Florence two winters ago!" exclaimed the old Squire, in a husky voice. The poor girl must have been struck at the moment she reached the landing to go to her room.

The scene was one of indescribable confusion. The guests were horrified. Mrs. Milbourne was upon her knees weeping and trying to obtain some response to her words, but all knew too well by the appearance of the waxen countenance that the lips that had only an hour ago repeated the vows at the altar were closed for ever.

In the first moments following the tragic discovery everyone stood dumfounded. Then, when the terrible truth that young Mrs. Kenyon was dead had been realised, the women wailed and the men gave vent to expressions of utter bewilderment. Among the guests were three local medical men—Dr. Lewis of King's Cliffe; Dr. Pink, the popular Squire of Lyddington; and Dr. Pridie, of Wansford—all of whom commenced an examination.

Dr. Lewis was the first to announce the result of his professional investigation.

"It is a fact," he said gravely, raising his head. "The poor, unfortunate young lady has received a fatal wound, and is already dead."

With this the other two medical men entirely agreed, but, although a hundred inquiries were directed towards them as to how she had been struck, neither cared to express an opinion before making a post-mortem. All the information they gave was that a coroner's inquiry would be necessary, and that the best course was to inform the village policeman at once and set the machinery of the law in motion.

(*Continued on Page 190.*)

ICE-FIELD BREAKS AWAY: Particulars of the breaking away of an immense ice-field, in consequence of the great storm that took place in the Gulf of Finland recently, have just come to hand. It was forced away from the Esthonian shore with a thousand fishermen and their property on it. On the same day 120 men, with fifty horses, were taken off near the lighthouse station of Someri, among the Finnish cliffs.

Photo, Sturdee.

BUDDING JACK TARS: Boys of the Naval School, Greenwich, being taught their work round the model of an ironclad. This has only just been added to the school, and is a perfect reproduction of a modern warship. Before the introduction of this model the boys had to learn from models of obsolete vessels and diagrams.

Photo, Clarke & Hyde.

STUDIES IN SOMERSAULTS: A unique snapshot of acrobats rehearsing at home for a daring music hall "turn."

WHAT GERMANS THINK OF BRITAIN.

Extraordinary Delusions of British Animosity.

The ignorance of Germans on the subject of our country is extraordinary, among the German people at large most distorted views on all things British prevail.

A German governess in London, writing to her relations, says: "I am strongly advised not to remain in England, as this is a very critical time for all Germans. London is crowded with vigorous German men and women who are willing to perform any sort of work for trifling wages, in order to learn the language. Thousands of British men and women are starving on this account, and the hate these people bear towards every German is terrible. Every moment an outbreak of violence can be expected in the East End of London. A new law is said to be in preparation forbidding anyone to give Germans work except under very unusual circumstances, in order that the awful poverty of the English workmen and workwomen shall be alleviated.

"No good commercial house now engages Germans, but only British or French workmen and messengers. Only Jews and mean or poor people now engage Germans. It is quite time that the Kaiser should take energetic steps to forbid or obstruct German emigration to England. It is a disgrace to the German nation that it should cause itself to be despised and mocked by such an arrogant nation as the English.

"French people are also ill disposed towards Germans, but in a more good-natured way. In France I have never had to suffer from domestic servants the annoyances which are caused me by British domestic servants owing to their hatred of Germans.

"What pleases me much about the English is that the men, as well as the women, young and old, regularly go to church. One always sees the whole family in church, even to the baby with its nurse and all the servants. The clergyman always prays for England's glory, honour, prosperity, and victory on this earth. The clergy bring every little political affair into the sermon, and continuously stimulate the national pride.

"Through the clergy, Parliament is able to get everything it wishes from the people. They know how to persuade their congregations with beautiful and pious addresses, so that everyone is convinced that they are right. I wish I could take down one or two sermons for you in shorthand. The clergymen also preach every day in the streets, in Hyde Park, and at every corner and square. There are also the Salvation Army and a tremendous number of Nonconformist clergymen. It is impossible to walk for half an hour in the streets—Sundays and week-days—without hearing hymns and long sermons in the open air, many of them dealing with politics.

"At first I also stopped at every such street congregation and listened. For a town so large as London it is really necessary. Many cannot go to church at all, such as the cabmen, newspaper sellers, and others.

"After the services every English clergyman amuses himself with his congregation in such sports as football and cycling, hundreds of persons often making cycling excursions together. A weekly contribution covers the costs for food and drink. Nothing is drunk except tea. And everything is under the supervision of the clergymen. They know so well how to win the hearts of young and old, men and women, that the people can do nothing without their parson."

Desgranges.

Mr. Isidore de Lara, the English composer of the successful grand opera "Sanga," recently produced at Nice, also of "The Light of Asia," "Amy Robsart" and "Messaline"; all of which have been heard at Covent Garden.

WHAT THE GERMANS THINK OF BRITAIN: See the article on this page.

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Photo, Park.

One of the two-and-twenty Shetland ponies that draw Cinderella's coach in the pantomime at Drury Lane has taken a particular fancy to Miss Queenie Leighton, the Principal Boy, and visits her every evening in her dressing-room, knowing that lumps of sugar are to be found there. The pony needs no guidance to find its way.

Continued from Page 188.

Then the great problem at once presented itself. Who was the murderer?

Hutton, rising from his knees with blood upon his hands and coat, briefly told his story, while several maid-servants, assisted by Kenyon and the three doctors, carried the dead bride to her room amid the sobs of the women.

"The atmosphere of the room grew too warm for me, and I went out and stood beneath the portico to get a little fresh air," Hutton explained. "While standing there I heard the rustle of silk behind me, and, turning, saw Kenyon's wife ascending the stairs. She remarked to me how warm it was in the dining-room, and gaily announced that she was on her way to dress. I walked to the foot of the stairs and urged her to remain a moment, as I wished to speak to her. But she declared that she was late and had a lot to do. She would, however, see me on her return downstairs. So I turned and walked out of the house and on to the lawn. Ten minutes afterwards, my faintness having passed, I returned to the hall, and as I passed along towards the dining-room something white on the landing upstairs caught my eye. I looked again, and, to my amazement, saw that it was young Mrs. Kenyon, who had fallen in a heap just at the top of the stairs. I rushed up to her, believing that she had fainted, but as soon as I raised her head I saw that a tragedy had been enacted, for blood was flowing from the wound. She was not then dead, for in response to my inquiry as to what had occurred, her lips moved. But I could distinguish no sound. Then a moment later with a long sigh her last breath left her."

"So she had died with her secret on her lips," remarked old Mr. Milbourne, utterly broken down. "We must discover who murdered her. No expense shall be spared, even if it costs me my last farthing. You saw no one, I suppose, Mr. Hutton?"

"No one, except one of the maids who passed me and entered the dining-room carrying a tray. Of course, when I raised the alarm, the butler and several of the maids came at once to the spot."

"The poor girl must have had an enemy," her father said. "The fact that she has been killed at the very moment of her triumph points strongly to the presence of some jealous lover. And yet I have never heard of her being courted by any man save Kenyon."

The local member of the Northamptonshire Constabulary, an unusually smart man for a village policeman, rushed over to the Manor without waiting to put on his uniform. He heard Hutton's story, saw the body of the unfortunate bride whose wedding he had witnessed little more than an hour before, and after taking some notes, bustled off to the telegraph office at Castor to report to headquarters.

In her own pleasant room, where the mullioned windows looked out upon the broad level lawns and the old-world rose-garden, the dead bride was laid upon her bed, still in her ivory dress and orange-blossoms. They crossed her hands upon her breast over the jewels that glittered there, and although the light was dim by reason of the drawn curtains, her upturned face seemed calm and sweet in death. The ugly dark stain upon the ivory satin they covered with spring flowers taken from the vases, so that with her eyes closed she seemed but in a tranquil and untroubled sleep.

Near by lay the travelling-gown of dark brown cloth, a triumph of a West End dressmaker, which she was to have worn on her journey to Cannes, and open beside it stood her silver-mounted dressing-bag, a present from Douglas, ready packed. Was it not a cruel freak of Fate that the wedding-gown should serve as her shroud, and that the same sweet-smelling orange-blossoms, emblems of purity, should crown her brow before the altar and also serve as floral tributes at her tomb? Truly nothing is certain in this insecure life of ours.

The doctors, being among the last to depart, were discussing the affair in the library, while the bereaved husband and his best man were closeted together in another room.

"There's more mystery in this than we imagine," declared Dr. Lewis, standing with his back to the fire and addressing his two friends. "That the poor young lady had a secret enemy seems beyond all question, and that enemy was in the house. Now, was it a guest, a servant, or was it a stranger who had entered the house unobserved and waited for the bride to ascend the stairs?"

"The police will have to solve it," Pink remarked in his bluff way. "For my own part, I believe she must have been struck by one of the servants."

Dr. Pridie, a younger man, spoke with the slow, deliberate manner of the Scotsman, asking:

"What motive could a servant have? If we wish to establish the murderer's identity, we must first get at the motive."

"With that I quite agree, my dear fellow," said Lewis, with just a slight Irish accent. "But, do you see, there isn't the slightest ground on which to seek any motive whatsoever. As far as I know her, she seems to have been a very level-headed girl, not in the least a flirt—generous, kind-hearted, and possessing all the qualities to make her popular. To me, the one feature of the affair that is most peculiar is the fact that the crime was not premeditated. Had it been, the assassin would have provided himself with a weapon. On the contrary, it was committed on the impulse of the moment by a deadly weapon which hung close to the murderer's hand."

"The blow must have been a very hard one," Dr. Pink remarked, taking a pinch of snuff, a habit of his when puzzled.

"No, I scarcely agree," Lewis said. "The poignard was fairly sharp, and a very deadly weapon. Its style of manufacture with the hollowed blade of ornamental openwork down the centre was such that it would enter deeply with a very moderate blow. I happen to know something about mediæval arms. That dagger was of a kind used by the Florentines in the days of the wars of the Blacks and Whites. It was, however, generally used for the purpose of secret assassination. Its blade was rubbed with poison mixed with grease, and the latter remained in the openwork of the blade. On a person being struck, the poison, of course, entered his system, even though the knife might be immediately withdrawn. If no poison was procurable, then the blade was rubbed with the root of garlic, which had the same fatal effect upon the victim. Certain it is that the crime was not premeditated, but it is equally certain that the murderer could not have chosen a more terrible weapon. The centre of the blade is almost as thin as paper, and so beautifully tempered was the steel of those old days that even though with the rust upon it in places it did not snap."

His two companions were highly interested at this explanation, and both propounded their own views upon the matter.

"Well, let the police try and solve the mystery," Pink said at last. "I don't see what more we can do here to-day. We shall all hear from the coroner to-morrow, I suppose, and then we'll make the post-mortem. It seems that the constable has locked the door of the room and taken the key with him, so that nothing shall be disturbed before the arrival of his superiors."

"I really don't think it's any use remaining longer," Pridie agreed. "Our presence here just now can only be painful to the family."

So the three ordered their traps, and a quarter of an hour later were driving towards their homes across that long stretch of open country along the shallow valley of Nen.

(To be continued.)

A Professional Tooth Blacker—A Shan Beauty: Our photograph shows a Shan beauty-doctor, whose business it is to visit daily those natives who prefer black teeth to white, and stain their teeth.

Replies in Brief.

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J. C. C.—You can get the spray of Daniels Brothers, Norwich, or Carter's, Holborn, London.

Anxious.—Imprisonment for life virtually means a twenty years' sentence, and is subject to the usual deduction of three months per year for good conduct.

Mrs. A. P.—Fruit is grown on the old wood of both red and white currants, and on the new of black. The bushes should have been pruned in the autumn, but they may be done slightly later on. I should advise you, however, to ask a local gardener to see them first.

Ireland (North Shields).—There is no book dealing exclusively with the Irish terrier, but the whole of the various breeds are freely dealt with in the Terrier section of Lee's "Modern Dogs." The book is published at 10s. 6d. by Horace Cox, Bream's Buildings, London.

T. T. (Bury).—It is believed that quite 150 of the members of the new House of Commons are total abstainers. There are some forty-eight authors and journalists, and over 130 barristers and solicitors; also a similar number of merchants and manufacturers.

Dog Lover.—In 1796 the dog-tax was instituted, and again in 1808, the amount being 12s. per year. This assessed tax was repealed in 1867, and an annual excise duty imposed of 5s. on every dog over six months old. In 1878 this was increased to the present charge of 7s. 6d.

Irish Reader.—No, the gravings docks at Liverpool are the largest in the United Kingdom, and that port possesses the largest tobacco warehouse in the world, it is stated. Write to the secretary of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, Canning Place, Liverpool, for permit to inspect the warehouses and docks.

B. B. B.—I am sorry I cannot give you legal advice. If you do not want to go to the expense of consulting a solicitor, you could write to the legal editor of one of the Lancashire weekly papers, say the *Liverpool Weekly Courier*, Victoria Street, Liverpool. Write fully at once, and you may find the information in the following Saturday's issue.

J. R.—You cannot do better than apply to the Midland Railway Company for the 1906 edition of their pocket-book of shows, fairs, and sporting fixtures. This is a handy little volume, containing a complete list of agricultural, &c., shows, cattle and sheep fairs and sales, racing, cricket, and other sporting fixtures arranged for 1906, supplemented by useful information relating to the various kinds of traffic carried by the company, and their facilities for dealing with it. Any Midland station-master or district superintendent will supply you with a copy free on application.

Photo, Illustrations Bureau.

PRESENTATION AT TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD POLICE STATION: Mr. Cobbett was presented with a marble clock for assisting the police to arrest a violent prisoner in Tottenham Court Road. Mr. Cobbett was severely injured.

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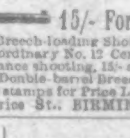
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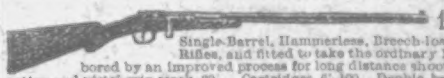
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